

An Essay on
Typhoid Fever
Respectfully submitted to the
Faculty of the
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One thousand eight hundred and
fifty four.

by J. B. Wood
of Pennsylvania

very fair

Typhoid Fever

There is according to different authors a great variety of typhoid affections, each characterized by certain peculiarities. We propose to treat of that one only which is characterized by an intestinal exanthema, succeeded by ulceration, and known by the Ancients as putrid or malignant, and at the present time typhoid fever.

The name given to this disease embraces two expressions diametrically opposed to each ^{other} typhoid meaning stupor, and fever a state of excitability, and would therefore seem to be no fever at all.

Fever is essentially inflammatory and is an element common to disease, where the organism still possesses its

reactive powers, and in some cases form the whole of the apparent phenomena, as for example in traumatic fever.

Typhoid Fever, may be considered the scourge of the present age, and bears a close analogy in its characteristic symptoms to the pest or small-pox. It pervades the air as a miasm, and makes daily fresh victims. It singles out persons of a vigorous constitution, and in the prime of life. As to the nature of the affecting agent, it imports us but little to know, for we can perceive by their various effects the law of similarity, and can therefore combat them by the appropriate remedies.

This disease is not considered contagious, except at the height of its development in the typhus stage, when it is decidedly so, and differs in this respect from Typhus, as well as in the intestinal exanthema, ? +

Diagnosis

The symptoms in the first or vegetative stage, are characterized, by great prostration of strength in proportion to the local symptoms, dullness of intellect, dislike to bodily or mental exertions, cephalagia, wandering pain in the back and loins, want of appetite, aversion to food, dizziness, shivering, and irregular fever, slight bleeding at the nose from decomposition.

of the blood, and diarrhea,

In the second or inflammatory Stage, there is usually an increase of the cerebral symptoms, dullness of hearing, often delirium; increase of fever, dryness of the skin, diarrhea, pains in the abdomen with tenderness, especially at epigastrium and right and left iliac regions; enlargement of the spleen, tympanitic distension of the abdomen from the accumulation of gas in the large intestine, anorexia, eruption of rose colored papula on the abdomen and thorax, which make their appearance about the end of the second week,

When the prognosis in the third stage is favorable, it is characterized by the symptoms of the inflammatory stage,

with a gradual decrease, about the end of the second week, and convalescence at the end of the third. If however the prognosis is unfavorable there is great prostration, dull vacant expression of countenance, stupor, coma, delirium, sordes on the teeth, rigors and frequent diarrhea mixed with blood.

The diarrhea, although it may begin at an early period of the disease, does not often set in before the second or third week, and may in severe cases last two or three weeks. The stools are thin, watery, fetid, turbid, and of a yellow or darkish color, seldom contain mucus, but occasionally mixed with blood, either liquid or grumous.

The tympanitic distension may

be slight, or so great as to cause dyspnea,
and like diarrhoea does not manifest
itself until about the end of the second
week.

This disease may occur at any
period of life, but most commonly from
the fifteenth to the thirty fifth year. It
is rare in childhood, and but few cases
occur after thirty five. Its duration
is of variable length from a week to one
or two months, the average period being
about twenty days.

It is not determined, what influence sex,
temperament, season, and occupation have
in its production.

Pathology

This disease is characterized in the pre-

curry stage, by a thickening and
secretion of whitish matter in the glands
of Peyer and their sub-mucous tissue,
in the inflammatory stage, there is in-
creased alteration, as well as injection
and commencement of ulceration in the
adjoining mucous tissue, and in the
third stage they become ulcerated; the
ulcers have irregular excavated edges,
which is sometimes preceded by distinct
yellow sloughs in the first stages; the
mucous membrane is reddened, but
very little altered in consistence.

The mesenteric glands and spleen,
are also involved in this disease, and
occasionally the heart, lungs, liver and
other organs are likewise affected.

Causes

The causes which operate to produce this disease, are densely populated places, particularly where a number of individuals are crowded into small apartments, and the air rendered impure by exhalations, from decomposed animal and vegetable matter, impure water, want of circulation, deficiency and improper quality of food, over exertion of body and mind, cold damp weather, mental emotions, it may arise after inflammatory fever treated by venesection, or other severe antiphlogistic treatment, or reaction of the organism, or an imperfect crisis after the same affection.

Prognosis

The prognosis is to be formed by the type of the fever, the local complications, the intensity of the symptoms, the regularity of its course, and the tendency to a disordered state of the fluids; — Stupor, Delirium, subultus tendinum, tremulous tongue, impeded speech, difficult deglutition, fetid exhalation, offensive dysenteric stools, involuntary evacuation of feces and urine, hicough, hemorrhages, early appearance of miliary eruption, effusions of blood under the skin, are very unfavorable signs. On the other hand, the absence of stupor, delirium, or abatement of febrile heat and thirst, gentle perspiration, returning strength of the pulse, loose bilious stools,

are favorable indications,

Treatment

In the first stage of the disease Pulsatilla is the most efficacious remedy, in lethargic, lymphatic constitutions, where frequent shiverings predominate, bitter taste, absence of thirst and appetite, nausea, mucous vomitings and stools, and an unhappy disposition, - it is likewise of great importance in the Second Stage, in persons of weak and relaxed constitution, with little or no thirst, gastric weaknesses, pale or yellow complexion, phlegmatic temperament, bitter taste in the mouth, anorexia, slimy vomitings, &c.

Mercurius, is particularly efficacious

in the first stage, in persons of a nervous-lymphatic constitution who are weak and delicate, with a pale yellowish countenance, covered tongue, insipid taste, little thirst, painful sensibility of the epigastrium and region of the liver, green, yellow diarrhoeic stools, slightly bloody, intestinal ulcerations, It is also useful in the second stage in underdeveloped gastric states; painful sensibility of the abdomen, watery stools, discolored or mixed with substances like the washings of flesh, occurring in the night, —

Bryonia, is invaluable when the disease threatens to pass into the second stage when there are nervous indications; tearing, throbbing, cephalalgia, starting,

nausea, vomiting, white tongue, bitter
mouth, thirst, dryness of the throat, eruption
on the lips and mouth, cramplike ten-
sion of the stomach, painful abdomen,
emission of wind, constipation, urine
scanty and turbid, hoarseness of voice,
pain in the side when coughing or
drawing a deep breath, distressing lar-
situde, pain in the limbs and joints, -

It is also applicable in the second stage,
when strong delirium is accompanied with
intense febrile heat, violent thirst with
dryness and vesicular eruptions in the
mouth, epigastrium sensible to pressure,
inflated stomach, shooting pains in the
sides of the chest in coughing, drowsiness
in the day time, restlessness at night, pulse
small and soft, trembling of the hands, -

clammy sweats; - in the third stage it is very efficacious in cases of violent delirium, strong febrile heat, great dryness of the skin, violent thirst, ulcers in the mouth and on the lips, painful inflammation of the epigastrium, involuntary emission of urine and excrement, oppression, moral depression, sleepiness without the ability to sleep, muttering, agitation, miliary eruptions &c. &c.

Thus *Toxicodendron* is useful in every stage, and is indicated when there is confusion of the head, shooting in the brain, dry burning heat, shooting in the head; tension and stiffness in the nape of the neck, fatigue and lassitude of the limbs, and when the whole of the

symptoms have the character of fbris
nerrosa stupida, as well as when the
alvine evacuations are extremely copious.
It is also an excellent remedy when the
decomposition of the blood is making
rapid strides which is seen by epistaxis
and petechial eruption.

Pelladonna, should be given in inflammatory
cases where the pulse is full, hard and
quick, the countenance animated, furious
look, vertigo, hot dry skin, dirty coated
tongue, violent thirst with inability to
swallow, abdomen tympanitic, oppression at
the pit of the stomach, the urine turbid
and of a deep color, when the patient
complains of headache, or when he
is prostrated, delirious, with the eyes

brilliant and fixed, eyes restless during sleep, frightful dreams.

Aconite, is very efficacious to alternate with Belladonna, when the arterial system is over-excited, as they generally induce perspiration which is the forerunner of general amelioration.

Acid Phosphoricum, is useful when there is a general stupor of all the organs, staring dull look, glassy eyes, no appetite, borborygmus with diarrhoea, intermitting pulse, muttering delirium, constant lying down, adhesive mucus on the tongue, stitches in the chest, liquid bloody stools,

Arsenicum is probably preferable to every other remedy in weakly exhausted persons, when the disease has a slow course, with loss of strength, parchment-like dryness of the skin, coldness of the limbs, putrid stools, depression of the lower jaw and when the patient is worse after midnight, great anguish and restlessness.

Nux Vomica is a useful remedy in excessive debility and insensibility of the system, constipation, white coated tongue, cutting or colicky pains in the abdomen, livid complexion, bitter and putrid eructations and taste.

Hyoscamus deserves consideration, when there is furious delirium, great debility, desire to escape, red sparkling eyes, and

very good.

parched tongue,

Lachesis may be used when there is vertigo on rising, delirium, stupor looks and when the patient complains of being worse after sleeping.

China is a useful remedy when the disease presents the appearance of a slow fever with paleness of the face, headache, hoarseness of hearing, dimness of sight, ringing in the ears, bad taste in the mouth, thirst, inflation and sensibility of the abdomen, watery stools, scanty urine, hiccough, difficult respiration, oppression of the chest, pain in the limbs, sleeplessness, coldness of the hands and feet,

Digitalis, is useful in nervous
lymphatic constitutions, where there is
dilatation of the pupils, clean tongue,
slow and regular pulse, great prostra-
tion of strength, distension of the
epigastrium, sickness and even vomiting.

Veratrum Album is a remedy of great
efficacy when the disease commences
with vomiting and liquid stools, with
cold limbs and cold sweat, and where
the elbows and knees are cold and
covered with petechia, pulse feeble, the
abdomen extremely painful, with involun-
tary stools it is an invaluable remedy.

In addition to the foregoing the follow-
ing remedies are sometimes useful viz.

Opium in a state of perfect coma,

Calcearia Carb. during the formation
of intestinal ulceration, and frequent
hemorrhages from the lungs, Arnica,
when there is stitches in the side with
fever. Nitric Acid, when Acid Phos.
failed to relieve intestinal hemorrhage,
Carbo veg. if the affected part becomes
gangrenous, &c.

